

Questions from IB seminar of 24th September, 2015

1. Why are we not introducing the Middle Year Program (MYP)?

The MYP is a very challenging program that demands heavy teacher training. The training is quite rigorous and the costs involved are very high. Moreover, the teacher attrition rate in IB schools is high.

Since we are currently a new school, we will first see how we do with the PYP and at a later stage we can decide whether we want to move towards the MYP.

2. How and when does a parent decide what stream to put their child in?

International Schools have a full time guidance counsellor and in Grade 9 there will be a lot of meetings between the student and the counsellor. The guidance counsellor will advise students about the options available within the country and abroad.

3. If a parent chooses to make a shift to the Indian system, at what stage should this be done?

This can be done after the IGCSE exams - by then the child would have developed the attitudes and profiles needed.

4. In which grades do students choose the subjects for a higher level?

Choices will begin at the end of Grade 8.

5. Is the IB Module designed by teachers or are there fixed reference?

The curriculum for the IBDP Program is fixed. There are no set textbooks for reference, the school can choose from a range of textbooks.

6. Is Teacher Training compulsory?

Yes teacher training is compulsory. The Principal and two other teachers were in a training workshop the last week. It is mandatory for all teachers to be trained in order for the school to get an IB accreditation.

7. Will the fees be hiked next year?

Yes, our fees are comparatively lower than most of the other schools offering the IB Program in Mumbai.

In order to cover our expenditures, like teacher training workshops, infrastructural improvements etc., we would need to increase the tuition fees.

8. To gear up for the Middle years (6-10) what are our plans in terms of enhancement of Faculty and Facilities?

We have placed various recruitment ads in leading newspapers. We will hire the best people for the school.

9. The school is currently offering Spanish. Are there plans to offer other languages?

Yes language is an important part of the IB Program. We might plan to offer French and Mandarin in the future.

10. Is it possible to have ICSE certificate to allow integration (after 8th) into mainstream Indian system?

It is possible, but not at DBIS.

11. Since there are no textbooks, only inquiry based learning, what will be there at higher grades?

From Grade 7 onwards, we will have textbooks.

12. How does the conversion take place from grades to percentages?

In IB, the highest grade is 7. The conversion is provided by the University. The school also gives transcripts which are accurate.

13. How does it work since admissions in the Indian system are given before the IGCSE results are out.

The IGCSE has changed the exam timetable to match the timeline of the Indian system. Examinations will now be held in March.

Other Questions

14. How does a child prepare for an Engineering / Medical exam?

There are a couple of options. Since the IBDP programme is quite rigorous and will not permit adequate time to prepare for JEE, a student may choose to join another school after Grade 10 that will prepare her for the above. Alternatively a student can take a gap year after the Diploma programme and concentrate fully on JEE.

15. Will the students have to take a break to prepare for admission to an IIT or IIM? And if the student takes the break will he be eligible age wise?

Part of the question is answered in 14. Yes a student will be eligible for admission to these institutes if he takes a gap year.

16. Can you please send us an email with the learner profiles to help us?

These have already been sent as a part of the inquiry and other booklets but we will send them once again.

17. When a child applies for FYJC in a local college on the basis of predicted marks, will the admission stand post result if scores don't match?

Professional colleges give admission on the basis of JEE rather than IB result. Some colleges do have percentage restrictions but I have not heard of any case of an IB student having to withdraw from a college after the actual results.

18. Your view on exams and mind-set of children on the same.

It is not so much the children's mind-set but that of the parents that needs to be considered. Examination is a form of assessment and assessment is always important for various reasons – to find out where the child stands (for parents, teachers, admin), for additional support, to give additional challenges to the gifted, for the teacher to know how well she is doing, etc. However, when exams and results become a focus of education then learning is sacrificed.

19. How do you see the whole programme in your experience convert into career for kids?

This is the fascinating part of the IB programme, if parents support it fully. It allows a child to explore her own passion without having to worry about branching out into a stream at a tender age of about 14 years. Students who have done the IB programme consider and experiment with – if parents permit – many options to find out their passion. Over the years some of my students have done the following – set up schools in rural Nepal, become curators at museums, taken up commercial art, conflict resolution in different parts of the world, many have become teachers in international schools, some have started NGOs in rural areas to work with a variety of marginalised people including orphans, rescued commercial sex workers, physically differently abled persons, quite a few are into generating alternative energy options at an affordable price, many have become academicians and have been given scholarships for doctoral and post-doctoral studies in the top universities of the world, some are musicians, some are artists and others are writers. Then of course there are those who have joined the IT or business field and taken up their parents businesses or work with them.

20. We as parents do not have any set target for our child; like becoming a doctor or lawyer or xyz: but just out of curiosity sake; if a student's wants to take medical field how does she go ahead?

This has been answered above but let me add that the IB will open up the world's colleges for your child and many IB students have become doctors, though not in India.

21. In which grade we will come to know or find out which field we should choose or he wants to master it.

Answered above.

22. Are arithmetic fundamentals as strong as in the Indian system?

Higher level Mathematics in the IB is very challenging and it makes a child think.

23. How is IGCSE/IB curriculum or method different?

The IGCSE is a tenth standard examination and the IB is a board that provides curriculum framework for schools. While the IGCSE prepares a child for an examination the IB focuses on making a child a lifelong learner.

24. How easy/difficult is it to integrate into Engg/ CA or Medicine courses in India after 10th /12th.

The IBDP is a very challenging programme and if a student has opted for higher level Maths, Economics and Business Management, he will have a good basis to prepare for CA. Higher level Biology and Chemistry will allow her to prepare for medicine courses.

25. If we decide not to send the child abroad would it make sense to do IB or just get out after IGCSE?

It depends on your perspective on education. If the mind-set is results' and exams' oriented then the IB is a waste of a parent's and a student's time, however if you want a child to learn how to learn then I would propose that you keep your child in an IB programme irrespective of where you propose to send your child for higher education.

26. After IBDP Programme, which degree programmes/ professional courses would be accessible In India?

All the three main streams are accessed by IB Students – Science, Commerce and Arts.

27. Based on your presentation, we understand the IB programme needs differently trained educators. In your opinion, does India currently possess a talent pool for the same?

This pool is surely limited but growing as the number of IB schools across the world grows. A school such as DBIS will look for teacher resources not only within the country but all over the world during job fairs that are held regularly for international schools.

28. As a parent, by when do we need make up our mind to change the curriculum/ school if the student wants to do any science or maths stream, and what are the challenges we will face then?

You could do this after Grade 8 or after Grade 10. The main challenge will be in adjusting to a different and traditional method of teaching that focuses on exams and results rather than learning.

29. Sports remain the same? Introduce more?

The focus on sports at DBIS will remain and grow. We will introduce as many sports as we are able to.

30. What will be the parent's role in teaching the child?

Imbibe the IB learner profiles and see that you practice them along with your child. Know what is going on in the classes and attend all the curriculum events that will be held in the school. Ask a lot of questions.

31. DBIS has its values/ way of teaching. How will the IB curriculum be conformed to this?

DBIS is only one year old and thankfully does not have a set way of teaching or thinking. It is ripe to adopt the IB way of teaching and learning and is already doing so. Our philosophy is very much in tandem with the IB's and that helps.

32. Will be helpful for the school to give us some links/ help us prep more as this is a different way of learning compared to what our children will undergo.

Answered above.

33. Is there any link between PYP to MYP and MYP to DYP?

If you see the IB's programme models you will see strong links between all its four programmes. The IB calls it a continuum across programmes. What strongly binds them together are elements such as concept based learning, the learner profiles, international mindedness, common approaches to teaching and learning, a solid philosophy and shared forums such as the Online Curriculum Centre that bring the IB world together. You should also check out www.ibo.org for more information and opinions in this matter.

34. What examination is accepted by University in India after Grade 10 from IB SCHOOL?

IB is offered in Grade 11 and 12 by schools that offer SSC, CBSE, ICSE and IGCSE. Universities accept all of these Grade 10 boards.

35. Why is IB better than IGCSE?

Answered above in the question on IB methodology.

36. If we don't go with IBDP and go with Indian System from Grade 11 then what is the eligibility.

Answered above.

37. Why there is change in thoughts within one year from IGCSE to IB and what assurance do we have that this will be a continued process and there will be no change again.

The change is from CIE (Cambridge International Examinations) to IB (International Baccalaureate). IGCSE is a grade 10 examination that CIE conducts. The CIE also offers CIPP up to Grade 5 and A levels for Grades 11 and 12. IB is a board that offers the PYP, MYP and DP programmes. The school has offered CIPP (also under the CIE) in the primary years and will continue to use best practices from CIE (to which we are affiliated and the IB). The question to ask is 'how does this change impact your child's learning?'. We have not changed over from CIE to IB. We will continue to incorporate the best from both the programmes in our classroom practices. We will offer the CIE's IGCSE exam for Grade 10 (as many other international school do) and the IB's Diploma Programme for Grade 11 and 12. The move toward the IB programme is due to the fact that the school has hired a Principal with nearly two decades of IB experience and who truly believes in the IB's philosophy and that its curriculum is the best on offer. You will find that by next year we are well settled into the IB way which should continue irrespective of who heads the school.

38. What about fields like Medicine? How does IB tackle that with Indian Colleges?

Answered earlier.

39. If we wish to send our child to a college in Maharashtra which Board of exam should we go for IGCSE or IB.

Answered earlier

40. IBDP students are not seen doing well in JEE. Does it mean that the probability of doing Medicine, Eng, etc in India is bleak?

See previous answers and I must say that I do not know of many IB students who have appeared for the JEE, so it is difficult for me to say if they 'are not seen doing well'.

41. For the IBDP final exams –is there uniformity in Questions asked all over Mumbai or India or the world?

The IB divides the world as per time zones and many countries come under the same time zone. Different papers are set for different time zones to preclude the possibility of examination papers being shared across the globe, which is a distinct possibility given the speed of the internet.

42. Who corrects these papers? Uniformity is expected in answers from the PYP board. But the kids are expected to give their own understanding.

There is no PYP board. IB is the board that offers the PYP programme which has NO examination. For the DP programme papers are marked by examiners across the world and are moderated by senior examiners. Your Principal has been an IB examiner for over 15 years and can assure you that it is a most rigorous and fair marking process. Students' own understanding, stated in their own language is valued rather than rote learning.

43. Those who do not opt for Grade 10 exams how does that work for kids who want to pursue further studies in India. What do their transcripts reflect?

Those who do not opt for the Grade 10 IGCSE examination will have to continue with the IBDP and then seek admission to Indian universities after Grade 12. If you want to do Grade 11 and 12 in the Indian system you will need to do the Grade 10 IGCSE.

44. Are kids more suited for Arts and Economics or Math and Science after doing an IB Programme?

Most students staying back in India after doing the IB have preferred to do commerce or other courses – such as Economics, English, Philosophy, etc. Among those going abroad there is a mix of preferences but a vast majority of them pursue non-science courses. This is because the IB does not place Math and Science on the same pedestal as the Indian mind-set does and students see many more options.

45. How do we plan to inculcate Indian content?E.g.; History at national and state level.

Till Grade 10 the IB does not prescribe content and schools are free to include Indian content. Even for the DP the IB gives a great deal of choice in the novels chosen for English (which include Indian authors) and even for History the IB allows every country that opts for its programme to select country-specific options. The same is with languages. The IB insists that each of its schools should have a broad language programme that includes development of mother tongue.

46. Which are the professions that your students have taken up? Please share your experiences of those students. Answered at length in question 19.

47. If student's wants to look forward to management programmes within India like with IIMs or abroad with Harvard Business School is that a feasible option or there is something the student needs to go through.

For IIM, students will have to independently prepare for the entrance examination. Many IB students from India and other part of the world go to Harvard Business School. They need to be very focused on doing well on all aspects of the IB programme.

48. What about a child who wants to do Pilots license?

Such a student will have to pursue a graduation course and then get a pilot's license. My student, JiteshBahl, who studied commerce after IB at Kodaikanal International School is now a pilot since the last four years.

49. Explain the transition from PYP to IGCSE from 6th to 10th in DBIS.

For Grades 6 to 10, on the lines of the IB's MYP programme, DBIS will set objectives for each subject so that students can prepare for IGCSE examination. The IB does not prescribe any content and a school is free to choose this for the middle school. Many school have a combination of curriculums which will lead to the IGCSE examination and also content that will meet with its own subject objectives. What is important is to do curriculum mapping that will take the student from one grade to the next in a continuum that will prepare her for the Diploma examination.

50. What is A levels programme? What is difference between IB and A Level? Which one is better?

The question should be 'what is the difference between the IB's DP and CIE's A level?' A level is the Grade 11 and 12 equivalent examination that is offered by the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and DP is offered by the IB. The A level is an examination while the DP is a holistic pre-university curriculum. A levels allow student to eliminate many subjects that they may not want to study at college whereas the IB insists on one subject from each of its groups. I am familiar with both the programmes and find the IB a better programme in many ways.

51. How can a student elaborate (adjust?) on the transition process from no exams to exams, textbook learning from Grade 6 to 10? Will it prepare students to appear for HSC exams?

If the student wants to go into HSC ultimately, then the fact that she appears for the IGCSE exam will surely prepare the student for HSC. But if parents are 100 per cent sure that they want their child to go back into the system from which they have sought to move away, then it is best to put the child back into an SSC school as soon as possible. There is no text book learning from 6 to 10. There is no text book learning even in Grades 11 and 12 for the IB. Texts are available and may be used as teacher resource or prescribed to students to help them prepare for their IGCSE exams. A teacher will not prepare her classes from a text book but use a variety of resources including her own knowledge, the internet, IB's online curriculum service, published journals, resource books and text books. Even students do the same.

52. On the basis of the predicted results will the children of IB acquire the admission in Indian colleges in the month of June?

Yes they do obtain such admissions and have been doing so for the past 30 years. They are given provisional admission and then this is confirmed when the results are declared.

53. Have children who have dropped a year with the intention of appearing for the JEEs, succeeded in scoring well? Yes they have done so but statistically very few students opt to do so. The IB does make them into independent learners but statistics will show that a student becomes well informed and broad minded and sees many more career options than are offered by the JEEs. IB students and their informed parents stop placing the sciences on a pedestal as we have traditionally done.

54. What percentage of students chooses to drop a year to prepare for JEEs?

There are students who choose to take a gap year for many reasons including the desire to serve the greater cause of humanity. As far as I know very few students drop a year to prepare for the JEEs.

55. When will the actual IB certification come and will it impact the fees structure in a significant manner?

The IB authorisation takes two years and yes there will be an impact on the fees as was explained in the meeting.

56. In social studies are we going to inculcate Indian history and geography?

Answered earlier.

57. What subjects will be offered in the Middle years for Humanities and Arts at DBIS to ensure continuity and an early entry for those subjects.

The humanities subjects offered will be History and Geography. Environmental systems has a lot to do with humanities also. In the Arts we propose to offer Visual Art and possibly Theatre and Music depending on the availability of teachers and student interest.

58. Do students fail or get detained under programs at DBIS.

Students are not allowed to be detained as per government regulations, however with parental consent a student who has missed a lot of classes due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances may be allowed to repeat a class.

59. Can a child do an IAS directly after the IB diploma Programme?

No a student may not do so. It is mandatory for students to have an undergraduate degree (BA, BSc, B.Com) for the same. Even in terms of age they will not qualify for this at the end of the IB programme.